

REMARKSAmendments

Claim 2, which has been indicated as allowable, has been rewritten in independent form, incorporating the limitations of claim 1. (Claims 9 and 10, originally dependent on claim 2, have also been indicated as allowable.) Claims 5, 7, and 8 have been amended and are now dependent on claim 2. Claims 1, 3, and 4 have been canceled. These amendments have been made in the interest of rapid prosecution and without prejudice to Applicants' right to prosecute claims of similar or different scope to the unamended claims in one or more continuation applications.

The Rejection Under 35 USC § 102(b)

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1 and 8 under 35 USC § 102(b) as anticipated by Gronowicz, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,818,676), insofar as the rejection is applicable to the amended claims. Applicants believe that this rejection has been rendered moot by the cancelation of claim 1 and the change to make claim 8 dependent on claim 2 which has been indicated as allowable.

The Rejection Under 35 USC § 103(a)

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 3 to 7 under 35 USC § 103(a) as unpatentable over Gronowicz, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,818,676) in view of Jacobs et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,140,297), insofar as the rejection is applicable to the amended claims. Applicants believe that this rejection has been rendered moot by the cancelation of claims 3 and 4, and by the amendment making claims 5 and 7 (as well as claim 6 which is dependent on claim 6) dependent on allowable claim 2.

Disclosure Under 37 CFR § 1.56

In fulfilling the duty of candor and good faith, the following documents are hereby disclosed to the Patent Office in accordance with 37 CFR § 1.56. It is not admitted that the information in the listed documents is material to patentability as defined in 37 CFR § 1.56(b). The Examiner is requested to consider the documents in the examination of this application.

Accompanying this statement are Forms PTO/SB/08A and PTO/SB/08B in duplicate on which the documents are listed. The Examiner is requested to return an initialed and signed copy of these forms once the documents have been considered.

The following documents were cited by the Japanese Patent Office in the International Search Report for International Application No. PCT/JP2004/009669 which is a counterpart for this application. Four of the documents were cited in category "Y" as a "document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art". The remaining documents were cited in category "A" as documents "defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance". A copy of the Search Report is attached.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

Document Number	Publication Date	Name of Patentee or Applicant	Translation	Category
JP-63-56901 A	03-11-1988	Murata Mfg. Co. Ltd.	No	Y
JP-6-36904 A	02-10-1994	Kuroshima et al. (Shinagawa Refractories Co. Ltd.)	Translation	A
JP-6-267709 A	09-22-1994	Ashida et al. (Murata Mfg. Co. Ltd.)	Abstract	Y
JP-8-203709 A	08-09-1996	Inoue (Furukawa Electric Co. Ltd.)	Abstract	Y
JP-2002-208504 A	07-26-2002	Sakamoto et al. (NEC Tokin Corp.)	Abstract	A
JP-3093633 Y1*	02-19-2003	Chu et al. (Polytronics Technology Corp.)	Counterpart	Y

* Counterpart of U.S. Publication No. 2003-0076643 A1.

Copies of Documents

A copy of each of the documents listed above is enclosed.

Fee

In accordance with 37 CFR § 1.97(c)(2), the Commissioner is authorized to charge the fee for submitting this Information Disclosure Statement (\$180) to Deposit Account No. 18-0560.

Conclusion

It is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance and such action at an early date is earnestly requested. If, however, there are any outstanding issues which can be usefully discussed by telephone, the Examiner is asked to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



Marguerite E. Gerstner
Registration No. 32,695
Telephone (650) 361-2483